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28 June 1963

MEMORANDUM TO: AD/CI

FROM

THROUGH

SUBJECT : Press Figures on Sugar Planting in Cuba

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1. New sugar cane is planted twice a year in Cuba, in the spring and in the fall. The spring planting usually occurs during the April-June period and can be cut (but does not have to be) from 20 to 24 months thereafter. The fall sowing usually takes place from September through December and matures more quickly, being harvestable within 16 to 18 months after planting. Hence the amount of cane planted now will not affect the 1964 sugar harvest, but it can affect the 1965 crop. Due to the shorter maturation period of the fall sowing, however, deficiencies in the spring plantings can at least theoretically be overcome by the end of the year with no losses to the sugar harvest of two years hence.

2. As of 9 May, Cuba had met only 10.6 percent of its national sugar planting goals for the spring sowing, according to a deputy minister of industries. The goal was to plant land areas totaling 13,200 caballerias, or 440,000 acres. The official then complained that "the sugar planting situation is poor."

3. The recent Hoy article cited by AP on 27 June suggests that the lag in planting is still serious, with only 39 percent of the spring planting goal likely to be met by 30 June, or the end of the spring planting season. Planting probably will continue beyond 30 June, but not at the same rate. Other tasks in connection with the sugar industry generally absorb most of the time of the sugar workers during the July-September period, such as fertilizing, weeding, spraying, and so on.

4. The planting goals set by the regime are high and were so fixed in order to satisfy the regime's publicly

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avowed determination to produce a 7 million-ton sugar crop in 1965 and thereafter. Presumably this spring's failure to meet planting goals will result in a heavier planting program for the fall.



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